

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

**RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AGREEMENT BETWEEN
CHAPTER 13 DEBTORS AND THEIR ATTORNEYS**

(Court-Approved Retention Agreement, Revised as of 4/20/2015)

Chapter 13 gives debtors important rights, such as the right to keep property that could otherwise be lost through repossession or foreclosure, but Chapter 13 also puts burdens on debtors, such as the burden of making complete and truthful disclosures of their financial situation. It is important for debtors who file a Chapter 13 bankruptcy case to understand their rights and responsibilities in bankruptcy. In this connection, the advice of an attorney is often crucial. Debtors are entitled to certain services from their attorneys, but debtors also have responsibilities to their attorneys. In order to assure that debtors and their attorneys understand their rights and responsibilities in the Chapter 13 process, the judges of the Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Illinois have approved this agreement, setting out the rights and responsibilities of both debtors in Chapter 13 and their attorneys, including how their attorneys will be paid for their services in the Chapter 13 case. By signing this agreement, debtors and their attorneys accept these responsibilities.

The Bankruptcy Code may require a debtor's attorney to provide the debtor with certain documents and agreements at the start of the representation. The terms of this court-approved agreement take the place of any conflicting provision in an earlier agreement. This agreement cannot be modified in any way by other agreements. Any provision of another agreement between the debtors and the attorney that conflicts with this agreement is void.

A. BEFORE THE CASE IS FILED

THE DEBTOR AGREES TO:

1. Discuss with the attorney the debtor's objectives in filing the case.
2. Provide the attorney with full, accurate and timely information, financial and otherwise, including properly documented proof of income.

THE ATTORNEY AGREES TO:

1. Personally counsel the debtor regarding the advisability of filing either a Chapter 13 or a Chapter 7 case, discuss both procedures (as well as non-bankruptcy options) with the debtor, and answer the debtor's questions.
2. Personally explain to the debtor that the attorney is being engaged to represent the debtor on all matters arising in the case, as required by Local Bankruptcy Rule, and explain how and when the attorney's fees and the trustee's fees are determined and paid.
3. Personally review with the debtor and sign the completed petition, plan, statements, and schedules, as well as all amendments thereto, whether filed with the petition or later. (The schedules may be initially prepared with the help of clerical or paralegal staff of the attorney's office, but personal attention of the attorney is required for the review and signing.)
4. Timely prepare and file the debtor's petition, plan, statements, and schedules.

5. Explain to the debtor how, when, and where to make all necessary payments, including both payments that must be made directly to creditors and payments that must be made to the Chapter 13 trustee, with particular attention to housing and vehicle payments.

6. Advise the debtor of the need to maintain appropriate insurance.

B. AFTER THE CASE IS FILED

THE DEBTOR AGREES TO:

1. Make the required payments to the trustee and to whatever creditors are being paid directly, or, if required payments cannot be made, to notify the attorney immediately.
2. Appear punctually at the meeting of creditors (also called the "341 meeting") with recent proof of income and a picture identification card. (If the identification card does not include the debtor's social security number, the debtor must also bring to the meeting a social security card.) The debtor must be present in time for check-in and when the case is called for the actual examination.
3. Notify the attorney of any change in the debtor's address or telephone number.
4. Inform the attorney of any wage garnishments or liens or levies on assets that occur or continue after the filing of the case.
5. Contact the attorney immediately if the debtor loses employment, has a significant change in income, or experiences any other significant change in financial situation (such as serious illness, marriage, divorce or separation, lottery winnings, or an inheritance).
6. Notify the attorney if the debtor is sued or wishes to file a lawsuit (including divorce.)
7. Inform the attorney if any tax refunds to which the debtor is entitled are seized or not received when due from the IRS or Illinois Department of Revenue.
8. Contact the attorney before buying, refinancing, or selling real property, and before entering into any loan agreement.
9. Supply the attorney with copies of all tax returns filed while the case is pending.

THE ATTORNEY AGREES TO:

1. Advise the debtor of the requirement to attend the meeting of creditors, and notify the debtor of the date, time, and place of the meeting.
2. Inform the debtor that the debtor must be punctual and, in the case of a joint filing, that both spouses must appear at the same meeting.
3. Provide knowledgeable legal representation for the debtor at the meeting of creditors (in time for check-in and the actual examination) and, unless excused by the trustee, for the confirmation hearing.
4. If the attorney will be employing another attorney to attend the 341 meeting or any court hearing, personally explain to the debtor in advance, the role and identity of the other

attorney and provide the other attorney with the file in sufficient time to review it and properly represent the debtor.

5. Timely submit to the Chapter 13 trustee properly documented proof of income for the debtor, including business reports for self-employed debtors.
6. Timely respond to objections to plan confirmation and, where necessary, prepare, file, and serve an amended plan.
7. Timely prepare, file, and serve any necessary statements, amended statements, and schedules and any change of address, in accordance with information provided by the debtor.
8. Monitor all incoming case information (including, but not limited to, Order Confirming Plan, Notice of Intent to Pay Claims, and 6-month status reports) for accuracy and completeness. Contact the trustee promptly regarding any discrepancies.
9. Be available to respond to the debtor's questions throughout the term of the plan.
10. Prepare, file, and serve timely modifications to the plan after confirmation, when necessary, including modifications to suspend, lower, or increase plan payments.
11. Prepare, file, and serve necessary motions to buy or sell property and to incur debt.
12. Object to improper or invalid claims.
13. Timely respond to the Chapter 13 trustee's motions to dismiss the case, such as for payment default, or unfeasibility, and to motions to increase the percentage payment to unsecured creditors.
14. Timely respond to motions for relief from stay.
15. Prepare, file, and serve all appropriate motions to avoid liens.
16. Provide any other legal services necessary for the administration of the case.

C. *TERMINATION OR CONVERSION OF THE CASE AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER APPROVING FEES AND EXPENSES*

1. Approved fees and expenses paid under the provisions set out below are generally not refundable in the event that the case is dismissed prior to its completion, unless the dismissal is due to a failure by the attorney to comply with the duties set out in this agreement. If such a dismissal is due to a failure by the attorney, the court may order a refund of fees on motion by the debtor.
2. If the case is dismissed after approval of the fees and expenses but before payment of all allowed fees and expenses, the order entered by the Bankruptcy Court allowing the fees and expenses is not a judgment against the debtor for the unpaid fees and expenses based on contract law or otherwise.
3. If the case is converted to a case under chapter 7 after approval of the fees and expenses under this agreement but before the payment of all fees and expenses, the attorney will be entitled to an administrative claim in the chapter 7 case for any unpaid fees and expenses, pursuant to section

726(b) of the Bankruptcy Code, plus any conversion fee the attorney pays on behalf of the debtor.

D. RETAINERS AND PREVIOUS PAYMENTS

1. The attorney may receive a retainer or other payment before filing the case but may not receive fees directly from the debtor after the filing of the case. Unless the following provision is checked and completed, any retainer received by the attorney will be treated as a security retainer, to be placed in the attorney's client trust account until approval of a fee application by the court.

■ The attorney seeks to have the retainer received by the attorney treated as an advance payment retainer, which allows the attorney to take the retainer into income immediately. The attorney hereby provides the following further information and representations:

- (a) The special purpose for the advance payment retainer and why it is advantageous to the debtor is as follows:
By agreement of the parties for prepetition and preconfirmation work, including consultation, drafting petition and plan, 341 meeting, negotiation with creditors, court hearings, amendments etc.
- (b) The retainer will not be held in a client trust account and will become property of the attorney upon payment and will be deposited into the attorney's general account;
- (c) The retainer is a flat fee for the services to be rendered during the chapter 13 case and will be applied for such services without the need for the attorney to keep detailed hourly time records for the specific services performed for the debtor;
- (d) Any portion of the retainer that is not earned or required for expenses will be refunded to the client; and
- (e) The attorney is unwilling to represent the debtor without receiving an advanced payment retainer because of the nature of the chapter 13 case, the fact that the great majority of services for such case are performed prior to its filing, and the risks associated with the representation of debtors in bankruptcy cases in general.

2. In any application for compensation the attorney must disclose to the court any fees or other compensation paid by the debtor to the attorney for any reason within the one year before the case filing.

E. CONDUCT AND DISCHARGE

1. *Improper conduct by the attorney.* If the debtor disputes the sufficiency or quality of the legal services provided or the amount of the fees charged by the attorney, the debtor may file an objection with the court and request a hearing.

2. *Improper conduct by the debtor.* If the attorney believes that the debtor is not complying with the debtor's responsibilities under this agreement or is otherwise engaging in improper conduct, the attorney may apply for a court order allowing the attorney to withdraw from the case.

3. *Discharge of the attorney.* The debtor may discharge the attorney at any time.

F. ALLOWANCE AND PAYMENT OF ATTORNEYS' FEES AND EXPENSES

1. Any attorney retained to represent a debtor in a Chapter 13 case is responsible for representing the debtor on all matters arising in the case unless otherwise ordered by the court. For all of the services outlined above, the attorney will be paid a flat fee of \$4,000.00

2. In addition, the debtor will pay the filing fee required in the case of \$310.00

3. Before signing this agreement, the attorney has received , \$750.00

toward the flat fee, leaving a balance due of \$3,250.00; and \$0.00 for expenses,


leaving a balance due for the filing fee of \$0.00

4. In extraordinary circumstances, such as extended evidentiary hearings or appeals, the attorney may apply to the court for additional compensation for these services. Any such application must be accompanied by an itemization of the services rendered, showing the date, the time expended, and the identity of the attorney performing the services. The debtor must be served with a copy of the application and notified of the right to appear in court to object.

Date: March 25, 2016

Signed:


Corey E. Meyer


~~Andrew C. Marzan ARDG #6346348~~

Attorney for the Debtor(s) George M. Vogl #6273590

Debtor(s)

Do not sign this agreement if the amounts are blank.

Local Bankruptcy Form 23c

(312)853-0200 Fax: (312)873-4693

ATTORNEY RETENTION CONTRACT

FOR OFFICE USE (13)	
Client No.	67134
Responsible attorney:	Am
CARA signed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N

1. **Parties.** In this contract, "Client" means the undersigned, both individually and jointly; "Attorney" means Ledford, Wu & Borges, LLC and its staff attorneys. This contract shall supersede any prior contracts and agreements between the parties to the extent of inconsistency. **In the event of any inconsistency between this contract and a Court-Approved Retention Agreement, the latter shall prevail.**

2. **Services:** Client retains Attorney for the following services: ☐ Chapter 13 bankruptcy (debt adjustment)

3. **Scope of Representation:**

(a) Attorney will counsel and represent Client in all aspects of the above matter(s) for the fee specified in Paragraph 4 EXCEPT: (1) adversary proceedings; (2) post-discharge litigation; (3) appeals; (4) other (specify): _____.

(b) Attorney may agree, but is not obligated, to represent Client in the above excluded matters for an additional fee, to be agreed upon separately by the parties.

4. **Fees:**

☐ Legal fee: \$ 4000 - PLUS \$310 filing fee (court cost) (an additional Court-Approved Retention Agreement may apply)

☐ Expenses: \$ 60 (merged credit report and credit counseling)

TOTAL: \$ 4060 less retainer received: \$ 690 - Fee balance: \$ 3370 To be paid by: Am

The legal fee is an ☐ advance payment retainer ☐ security retainer ☐ classic retainer, and is a flat fee unless otherwise stated. Attorney is unable to represent Client without receiving an advance payment retainer since a security retainer will be within the reach of Client's creditors. Should hourly billing be necessary, Attorney's billing rates are \$300-\$400/hour for partners, \$250/hour for associates, and \$90/hour for law clerks. The filing fee and expenses are subject to change at any time. The billing rates are subject to an annual review and potential increase every calendar year.

The legal fee covers the initial consultation and all subsequent work. The case may be closed if the fees are not paid by the deadline. Additional legal fees may apply if the parties have entered into a Court-Approved Retention Agreement and such Agreement so authorizes, or if the case is converted from one chapter to another. Additional court costs may apply for amending a petition, list, schedule or statement post-filing or other reasons not due to Attorney's fault. NSF checks will be assessed a \$20 fee.

5. **Initial Consultation.** Client acknowledges that Attorney has explained the following (please initial):

☒ CEM The options of Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 and that Client has made the choice identified in Paragraph 2

☒ CEM The concepts of exemption, discharge and dischargeability, and pre-filing and post-filing procedures

☒ CEM The difference among various types of retainer and that Client has made the choice identified in Paragraph 4

☒ CEM A Chapter 13 plan will be submitted to the Court in good faith. The plan payment may have to increase if creditor claims come in higher than scheduled, creditors successfully argue that they are entitled to a higher interest rate, the Trustee successfully argues that the budgeted income is lower than actual income, the Trustee successfully argues that budgeted expenses are unreasonably high or the Court makes a finding that the plan is not the best effort you can make to repay your creditors.

☒ CEM **TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE.** Any delay on Client's part may disqualify Client for the type of relief elected or otherwise adversely affect Client's case. Attorney may not be able to file the case, or take other necessary actions, until all requested documents and/or information, including but not limited to a certificate of credit counseling, are received by Attorney

Other (specify): _____

Client understands that the advice given during the initial consultation is preliminary and based on the information available at the time, and may change as the case is further analyzed, more facts discovered, or Client's circumstances or the law changed.

6. **Client's Duties.** Client agrees, during the course of representation, to:

(a) provide Attorney with full, accurate and timely information, financial and otherwise;

(b) follow Attorney's procedures and cooperate with Attorney in providing requested documents and information;

(c) promptly inform Attorney of any change of address, phone number, e-mail address or employment, or activation of military duty;

(d) inform Attorney before buying, selling, refinancing or transferring any real property in which Client has any interest, and before incurring any new debt, including but not limited to applying for an auto loan, personal loan, payday loan or title loan, applying for a credit card or line of credit, or using an existing credit card or line of credit; and

(e) promptly inform Attorney if Client becomes entitled to an inheritance, an asset as a result of a property settlement agreement with Client's spouse or a divorce decree, life insurance proceeds, or a monetary judgment, award or settlement.

7. **Co-counsel.** Client understands that more than one attorney may work on this case. Where necessary, Client agrees to employ outside counsel, at Attorney's expense, to work on this case, including: Kathleen W. Vaught, Kelly M. Johnson, David Carter, or Christina Banyon.

8. **Termination.** Client may discharge Attorney at any time, subject to payment of any fee owed for the services already rendered. Attorney may terminate the representation as permitted by the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct and Local Bankruptcy Rules. Any flat fee for a bankruptcy case is advance payment for future services, becomes Attorney's property upon receipt, and is nonrefundable upon filing of the petition. In the event the representation is terminated by either party before filing and Client has paid Attorney more than \$300, Attorney will provide Client with a detailed itemization of the services rendered in support of any fee charged at the rate set forth in Paragraph 4, and Client will reimburse Attorney for any expenses, including those that otherwise would be free of charge, and authorizes Attorney to apply the filing fee and any payment for expenses that have not been incurred towards the attorney's fee, subject to the requirements set forth herein.

X [Signature] X _____
Attorney Signature: ARDC # 6316303

Date: 3 / 14 / 2016

LEDFOORD, WU & BORGES, LLC
105 W. Madison, 23rd Floor, Chicago, IL 60602
(312)853-0200 Fax: (312)873-4693
CONSULTATION AGREEMENT

FOR OFFICE USE	
Client No.	63481
Interviewing Attorney:	
Date:	3-4-16

THIS AGREEMENT IS REQUIRED BY FEDERAL LAW (11 U.S.C. § 528(a))

1. **Parties:** In this contract, "Client" means the undersigned, both individually and jointly; "Attorney" means the law firm of Ledford, Wu & Borges, LLC and its staff attorneys.

2. **Purpose:** Client has requested the opportunity to consult with and obtain information and advice from Attorney concerning options for relief from debts, which may include filing bankruptcy. This agreement is for purposes of that consultation only.

3. **Client's Duties:** In order for Attorney to give meaningful advice, Client agrees to give accurate, honest, full and fair disclosure of financial information concerning income over the past three years from all sources, monthly living expenses, the type and amount of all debts (including names and addresses of all creditors), all assets and property owned by the client, wherever located and by whomever held, and any additional information determined by Attorney to be relevant.

4. **Services:** The attorney agrees to provide Client with the following services:

- a. analyzing Client's financial circumstances based on information provided by Client;
- b. to the extent possible, advising Client of bankruptcy options and non-bankruptcy options based on the information provided by Client;
- c. if Client has not provided Attorney with sufficient information upon which to fully advise Client on Client's options, informing Client what additional information Client needs to provide in order to enable Attorney to provide such advice and information;
- d. where applicable, advising Client of the requirements placed upon Client to file a bankruptcy; and
- e. to the extent possible, quoting a fee for providing bankruptcy and/or nonbankruptcy assistance to Client

5. **Fees (check one):**

☒ A consultation fee will be waived if Client decides not to retain Attorney, in which case the attorney-client relationship shall terminate at the conclusion of the interview

☐ Client agrees to pay \$_____ in nonrefundable consultation fee

In the event Client decides to retain Attorney, this consultation becomes billable and is covered by the legal fee charged for the case, and a new written contract, as well as a Court-Approved Retention Agreement if applicable, must be signed by Client and Attorney, which shall supersede this agreement. The new agreement(s) will also provide a detailed explanation of the parties' obligations and a breakdown of the costs.

6. **Acknowledgement:** Client acknowledges that the first date upon which Attorney provided any bankruptcy assistance to Client is the date noted above, and that Attorney provided Client with a copy of this agreement and the disclosure and information mandated by Section 527(b) of the Bankruptcy Code.

X J E May X _____ Date: 3 / 14 / 16

Attorney Signature: [Signature] ARDC #: 6310303

American Express
Po Box 3001
16 General Warren Blvd
Malvern, PA 19355

American Infosource
Po Box 248838
Oklahoma City, OK 73124

Bk Of Amer
Po Box 982235
El Paso, TX 79998

Citibank Sd, Na
Attn: Centralized Bankruptcy
Po Box 20363
Kansas City, MO 64195

Codilis & Associates
15W030 N. Frontage Road
Suite 100
Burr Ridge, IL 60527

Department Stores National Bank
911 Duke Blvd
Mason, OH 45040

Deutsche Bank
60 Wall Street
New York, NY 10005

Fifth Third Bank
Fifth Third Bank Bankruptcy Department,
1830 East Paris Ave.
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Furma Figma
FULL NAME OF CREDITOR
ATTY INFO

Green Tree Servicing L
Po Box 6172
Rapid City, SD 57709

Jpm Chase
Po Box 24696
Columbus, OH 43224

Kropik, Papuga, & Shaw
120 S. LaSalle St., Ste. 1500
Chicago, IL 60603

LOYOLA UNIV PHYSICIAN FDN
P O BOX 98284
CHICAGO, IL 60694

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Maywood, IL 60153

Loyola University
Administration Building
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Chicago, IL 60693

Macy's
PO Box 8218
Mason, OH 45040

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Po Box 1629
Maryland Heigh, MO 63043

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Medicredit, Inc
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Maryland Heigh, MO 63043

Northwest Collectors
3601 Algonquin Rd Ste 23
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Ocwen Loan Servicing L
12650 Ingenuity Dr
Orlando, FL 32826

Peoples Gas
Attention: Bankruptcy Department
130 E. Randolph 17th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601

Portfolio Receovery Associates
P.O.Box 41067
Norfolk, VA 23541

Quantum 3 Group LLC as agent for
Macy's
P.O.Box 657
Kirkland, WA 98083-0788

Ronald J. Hennings
PO Box 4106
Saint Charles, IL 60174

Sears/cbna
Po Box 6283
Sioux Falls, SD 57117

Specialized Loan Servi
Attn: Bankruptcy
8742 Lucent Blvd. Suite 300
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129

ST. ALEXIUS MEDICAL CENTER
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HOFFMAN ESTATES, IL 60194

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